



**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF REHABILITATION SERVICES**

"Helping individuals with disabilities to choose, find and keep employment"

Ticket to Work

What is the Ticket to Work Program?

The Ticket to Work Program is a new part of the Social Security program. It is for people between the ages of 18 and 64 who receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits because of disability or blindness. The program offers you greater choice in getting the services you need to go to work or to earn more money. The goal of the program is to help you to earn enough money so that you will not be dependent on Social Security cash benefits.

What's a Ticket?

- The "Ticket" is a document that shows SSA's commitment to pay an Employment Network or a State VR agency (ORS), for providing employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, and other support services to a Ticket holder.
- Use of Ticket to Work is voluntary. If you decide that you are not interested in the program, or that you are not able to work, you do not have to take part.
- You may decide when to use a Ticket to obtain services from an EN or from a State Vocational Rehabilitation agency.
- You may assign the Ticket to any EN willing to accept it.
- If you are not happy with the services you receive, you may take back your Ticket from the EN or from ORS at any time by contacting Maximus. You may reassign it as long as you continue to meet Ticket eligibility rules.
- Lost Tickets may be replaced by calling Maximus, Social Security's Program Manager, at 1-866-968-7842.
- You may assign your Ticket to only one EN at a time. You may not assign your Ticket to an EN and ORS at the same time. (An EN, to whom you have assigned your Ticket, may refer you to ORS for services only if the EN has a signed agreement with us.)
- Whether you decide to work with your State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (ORS) or another EN, you will be developing a plan that outlines your work goal and the steps to reaching that goal. EN and/or ORS will ask you to assign your Ticket to them when you sign this plan.
- Should you want to work, but not at a level where you stop receiving SSA monthly benefits, ORS will still assist you in reaching your work goal.

If You Choose ORS as your Ticket provider

- ORS, your State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, serves all eligible individuals.
- ORS is regulated under the federal Rehabilitation Act.
- Should you want to work, but not at a level where you will stop receiving medical insurance or SSA monthly checks, ORS will still assist you in reaching your vocational goal.

If You Choose ORS as your Ticket provider (continued)

- If you assign your Ticket to ORS, but later rescind your Ticket and assign it to another EN, it will **not** effect the services you receive from ORS.
- SSA will not conduct a medical review (CDR) while you are actively using a Ticket.
- This protection will last so long as you "meet timely progress" under the Ticket to Work rules. While you will not be protected from CDRs should you fail to "meet timely progress," ORS would still be able to work with you toward your employment goal under the terms of your Individualized Plan for Employment. Your ORS counselor or a benefits advisor can tell you more about protection from CDRs and "301" provisions.
- Maintaining SSA's "*timely progress guidelines*" is **not** a condition of obtaining services from ORS. The Individualized Plan for Employment outlines the services and time required for you to reach your goal.

Making Timely Progress While Using Your Ticket to Work

- During the initial 24-month period of using the Ticket, a beneficiary is using the Ticket if he or she engages in activities outlined in the IWP or IPE on a regular basis and within appropriate time frames.
- After the initial 24-month period, to be considered using a Ticket, the beneficiary must work at least 3 months at the non-blind "Substantial Gainful Activity" (SGA) level within the next 12 months. For example, in 2008 the person would be required to earn \$940.00 during these three months, prior to any income exclusions. These three months do not need to be consecutive.
- During the second 12-month period, the beneficiary must work at least 6 of 12 months at the non-blind SGA level prior to income exclusions. During the third and any subsequent 12-month review periods the beneficiary must work for 6 of 12 months with enough earnings to eliminate federal SSI and SSDI cash payments for those six months worked.

Ticket Resources Available to You

- DHS/Office of Rehabilitation Services will provide services to all Ticket holders who want to work. Call 401-421-7005, ext. 366 to learn more.
- Maximus, Program Manager of the Ticket to Work Program for Social Security, is available at 1-866-968-7842. This is a toll-free number. Toll-free number for individuals with hearing or speech impairments, 1-866-833-2967. Their website is www.yourtickettowork.com.
- Work Incentives Planning & Assistance services are available to assist you in understanding how to make use of work incentives available under SSA rules. Call 401-421-7005, ext. 405 or ext. 443 to speak with a Community Work Incentives Coordinator (CWIC).
- Your local Social Security office has detailed information on the Ticket to Work program. The national web site is www.ssa.gov/work. SSA's toll free telephone number is 1-800-772-1213.
- If you and your Employment Network have a dispute around the Ticket to Work Program or if you want help choosing your EN, you may access Protection and Advocacy services by contacting the Disability Law Center at 401-831-3150.

- ORS's Client Assistance Program and appeal process are available to all consumers of ORS services. Your Counselor has more detailed information about these services.